

**CITY OF HAMPTON**  
**2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
(Adopted December 1989)

**Introduction**

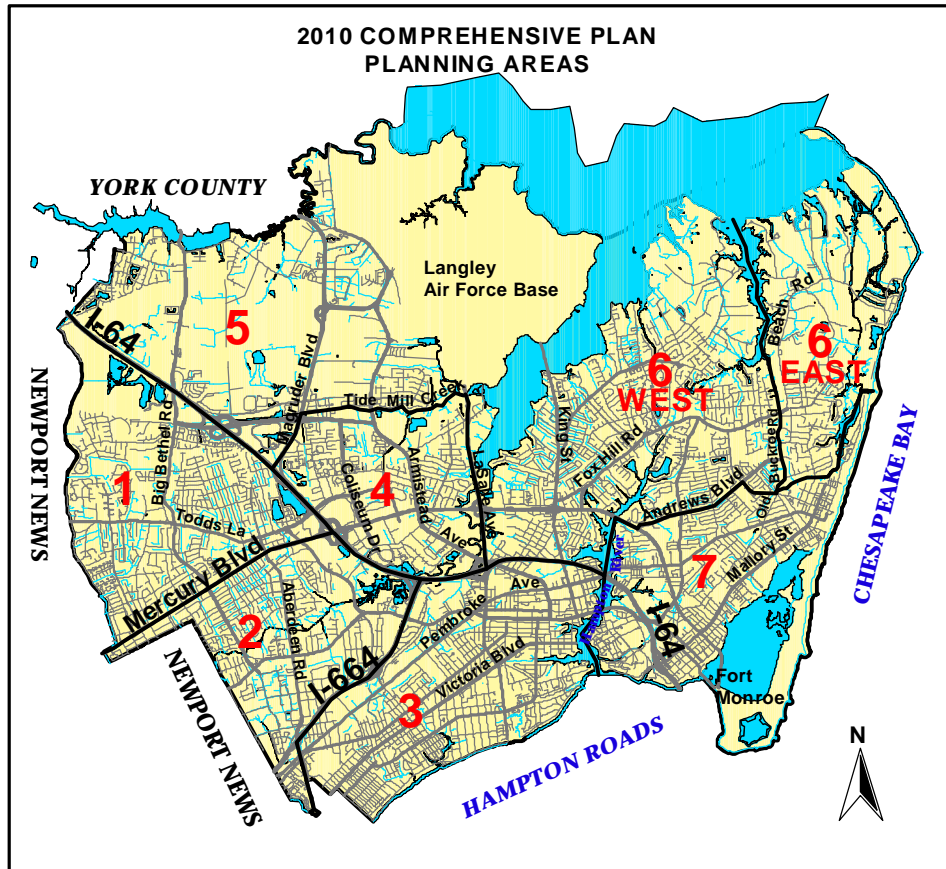
The Comprehensive Plan is a broad-based description of the City's long range intentions regarding the direction and nature of future development. Preparation of the initial Plan and regular updates represent the most thorough effort by local government to assess current conditions and establish a direction for future development.

The planning process also represents a major effort to incorporate citizen desires into long range public policy. The Comprehensive Plan is a synthesis of community opinion. It presents a clear picture of our future City and a statement of public policy to achieve this vision.

The Comprehensive Plan serves two valuable purposes. In its most general sense, the Plan describes a sense of what the community may look like in the future, and what is necessary in order for this picture to become a reality. The Plan also establishes public policy guidelines to aid decision makers in the difficult task of evaluating choices which will have future consequences related to the physical development of the City.

Together, these two purposes of the Comprehensive Plan provide a forward-looking perspective for future decision making upon which citizens and public officials alike may discuss issues upon common ground. The Plan provides the framework within which future decisions become a part of a continuous program to address our future needs.

The Plan is comprised of six elements. Each element focuses on one particular aspect of future development within the City, with an eye towards each of the other five elements. The six elements include discussions on Land Use, Transportation, Community Facilities, Environment, Housing, and Urban Design. Furthermore, the City is divided into seven planning areas, each representing a recognizable area or combination of areas. The planning areas provide a convenient means of comparing and monitoring trends in various parts of the City. In this way, the Plan provides the necessary information and guidance to be responsive to the varying needs of different areas of the City. **NOTE:** In 1996, the City was divided into ten neighborhood districts. These ten districts will be the basis for the 2020 Comprehensive Plan. However, the 2010 Comprehensive Plan will continue to maintain the seven original districts until the 2020 Comprehensive Plan is adopted.



## Amending the Comprehensive Plan

The implementation of the Comprehensive Plan has inevitably led to changes in the community. It is imperative that these changes be monitored, in order to determine whether the Plan remains applicable to new conditions. The Plan can be amended any time by City Council if a review of its effects finds that it is no longer appropriate. In Hampton, a citizen's advisory group to the Planning Commission reviews the Plan biannually and reports on the City's progress towards accomplishing the adopted goals and objectives.

## This Web Page

This Web Page summarizes the Comprehensive Plan by listing the more general recommendations for the City followed by more specific recommendation for each of the seven planning areas.

**For further information or a complete copy of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan, call the Hampton Planning Department at (757) 727-6140.**

## Summary of City-Wide Recommendations

## **Transportation**

- To support interstate highway, expressway system and state highway improvements which provide regional access to Hampton trade areas.
  - To support the construction of the Interstate 664 extension as the third tunnel crossing of Hampton Roads.
  - To support the widening and interchange improvements to Interstate 64 through the region.
  - To support the Hampton Roads Center Parkway construction project into the City of Newport News.
- To provide new or improved access to key economic growth areas of the city including Downtown Hampton, Mercury Central, the Magruder Corridor, Pembroke Avenue Corridor, Phoebus and Buckroe by assigning high priority to the improvement and reconstruction of major roads within and leading to these economic growth areas.
- To assure the utilization of arterial roadways for major traffic movements through and within the City and to assure that such movement is accomplished safely at desired speeds.
  - To require new land uses along newly constructed arterials to obtain access from streets which feed into arterial rather than accessing directly onto those major roads, whenever possible.
  - To prohibit direct access from any residential parcel to arterial roadways whenever possible.
  - To encourage a minimum separation distance of 800 feet between major street intersections on arterial roadways.
  - To require, whenever possible, that access to shopping centers, industrial parks, large multiple family dwelling projects and like uses be from an arterial road duly designated in the Thoroughfares Plan.
  - To require that all streets be constructed to current standards issued by the City.
  - To encourage the location of any new streets in developed areas of the community to utilize existing rights-of-way and undeveloped parcels to the greatest extent possible, and to ensure that such development causes minimal disruption to the adjacent uses and the community as a whole.
  - To encourage new arterial roads to be constructed around residential neighborhoods whenever possible.
- To assure the utilization of collector streets to channel major traffic movements into and out of separate areas of the community and to assure that such movement is accomplished safely at desired speeds.
  - To require that all collector streets be constructed to the appropriate standards issued by the City.

- To encourage a minimum separation distance of 800 feet between major street intersections on a collector street.
  - To discourage construction of short cul-de-sacs with direct access from any collector street.
  - To discourage direct access from individual residential parcels to a collector street.
  - To encourage the design of a collector street pattern which can be used for public transportation routes.
- To assure the utilization of local streets for providing access only to residential property and to assure that traffic movements on local streets are accomplished safely at low speeds.
    - To require that all local streets be constructed to the appropriate standards issued by the City.
    - To discourage the design of any local street that provides a continuous route between arterial roads.
    - To encourage the use of “T” intersections, cul-de-sacs and short loop streets on local streets in residential subdivision whenever appropriate.
    - To encourage all residential parcels to have access only to a local street.
    - To discourage the location of schools, churches, shopping facilities, etc., on local streets.
    - To encourage residential subdivision designs that minimize the number of street intersections with collector and arterial roads without sacrificing public safety.
    - To encourage the design of a local street pattern which puts all land uses within easy walking distance of public transportation routes on collector streets.
- To permit variation on street standards in planned residential developments.
    - To discourage access to any planned residential development by any street classified as “local” in the Thoroughfare Plan.
    - To permit reduced right-of-way and pavement widths consistent with the development proposal.
    - To permit private streets in planned unit developments when they are built to adequate standards.
    - To encourage at least two points of egress to new residential developments unless geographically impossible.
- To provide increased safety on the thoroughfare streets at intersections of major arterials.
    - To support the construction of grade separation where high volume arterials intersect.
    - To support the application of traffic system management techniques to improve the safety, efficiency and effectiveness of major arterial intersections.

- To support reconstruction of inadequately designed intersections to “T” and “cross” configurations.
- To pursue the right to reduce direct public costs for increased traffic impact caused by new development.
  - Develop and implement an equitable system of assessing the impact of new development upon existing thoroughfares and including the ability to identify necessary improvements directly associated with the proposed development.
  - Where appropriate, new development should be responsible for the cost of improvements identified above.
- To support expanding and improving public transportation or mass transit.
  - To support the expanded use of public mass transit to public facilities.
  - To encourage major employers and retail businesses to support public mass transition through utilization and sponsorship.
- To support expanding and improving air passenger and air cargo operations from the Patrick Henry International Airport including support for new terminal construction.
- To support channel dredging and maintenance for pleasure craft and commercial fishing boats.
- To support regional rail service and crossing safety.
  - To support rail passenger services in the Washington-Richmond-Newport News Corridor.
  - To support rail industrial access as related to economic development, whereby spur lines may be made available to new or expanding industry in the vicinity of the Pembroke Avenue Corridor.
  - To improve safety on thoroughfares where they cross railroad tracks.
- To integrate visual aesthetics into the design and implementation of road improvement projects including landscaping, street lighting, signage and surface treatment as specified by the urban design plan for specific areas within the City and to incorporate design and landscaping features into the funding of road improvements.
- To support the designation of a safer bike lane network.
- To support and encourage pedestrian movement within key growth areas of the city, which functionally serve to efficiently move pedestrian traffic and discourage vehicle dependency.
  - To provide aesthetically appealing public walkways or promenades to increase public access to waterfront and natural areas.

- To provide safe pedestrian crosswalks at appropriate destination points along minor arterials and collectors.
- To support shuttle service between hotels and commercial destinations to discourage the crossing of principal arterials by pedestrians and to encourage privatization of such service.

### **Community Facilities:**

- Utilize school grounds and buildings as the base for all community facilities.
- Develop standards for the facilities and a schedule to upgrade and maintain them.
- Expand public access to the waterfront through property acquisition and proper development. Construct additional public boat ramps and marina.
- Develop a bikeway plan utilizing existing and proposed rights-of-way and utility easements to link recreational facilities.
- Expand the supervised playground program to at least one neighborhood park in each Planning Area.
- Construct indoor pools at the middle schools. Establish community centers at all middle and high schools.
- Consider the role of public art as a development tool.
- Establish a Magnet School for the Arts.
- Consider an open-air amphitheater and other entertainment and cultural facilities to be concentrated in the Coliseum area.
- Maintain police and fire response times; increase cooperation with neighboring localities for assistance.
- Increase police visibility through a neighborhood precinct program.
- Monitor and evaluate the need for additional senior citizen's centers.

### **Housing:**

- Capture a larger amount of the region's high valued housing while preserving the wide variety of housing available.
  - Prime locations for higher value housing should be protected to preclude their use for less desirable development. Prime locations include:

- Waterfront properties anywhere in the city.
  - Areas in Fox Hill and Harris Creek which are suitable only for larger lot development due to environmental constraints.
  - Areas in Northampton adjacent to other high cost neighborhoods.
- Encourage more amenities such as water, recreational and open space features that can support higher cost housing in developments that will attract higher income residents.
- Develop a marketing program to encourage more demand for and to increase the supply of higher-income housing. Cooperate with homebuilders on specific sites to provide City funding for some infrastructure improvements. The result would be higher-cost housing or a higher amenity level in the development than what might have been provided without City participation.
- Preserve the supply of assisted housing. Any replacement housing should improve the quality of life for its residents and not decrease the quality of life for its neighbors. The Hampton Redevelopment and Housing Authority will implement many of the housing recommendations.
  - Monitor the existing assisted housing stock for potential changes in status or condition.
  - Retain existing units within federally financed rental developments in the low income housing inventory. Link financing assistance with regular inspections to ensure that units and developments continue to be well maintained and to provide decent and safe housing.
  - Provide eligible households with vouchers or certificates that may be used to obtain replacement assisted housing that meets minimum standards anywhere in the region. This system disperses low-income residents, and the guaranteed rental payments and necessary ongoing inspection of units helps to ensure that existing rental units will be well maintained.
  - Limit the number of new assisted housing units in any one development or area to no more than 100 units. The units should be designed to compliment the adjacent neighborhood. Develop policies concerning locational characteristics for any new assisted housing.
  - Ensure that surrounding property values are not adversely affected by new assisted housing.
  - Determine and prioritize the relative need for housing for special populations.
  - Develop policies for appropriate location and design of special needs housing.
- Preserve and strengthen existing stable residential neighborhoods.
  - Continue active enforcement of building and property maintenance codes. Develop city-wide programs to ensure that housing does not deteriorate to substandard condition.
  - Encourage and promote preservation, conservation and rehabilitation programs in older residential areas through a combination of federal, state and local programs.

- Conserve the housing already built in viable neighborhoods and provide incentives to ensure that existing homes remain well maintained.
  - Permit only that infill or redevelopment that is appropriate and will not disrupt existing neighborhoods.
  - Monitor housing values and conditions; target declining neighborhoods for concentrated assistance. City intervention should avoid the later need to undertake massive clearance in areas that have declined below a salvageable stage.
  - Restrict the encroachment of more intense land uses into existing stable neighborhoods.
  - Create transition buffer requirements in the Zoning and Site Plan Ordinances to protect incompatible land uses from each other.
  - Ensure that new development or redevelopment is of at least as high a quality as the adjacent existing development. New unit prices should exceed the median-housing price for the planning area in which they are located, unless the new units are meeting the needs of a special population.
  - Ensure that residential densities in new development are compatible with those of adjoining existing developments. If there is a significant change in density, special design controls should be met.
  - Promote and implement local preservation areas to maintain the character and development pattern of older neighborhoods.
  - Monitor public infrastructure in older residential areas and schedule improvements to prevent poor public infrastructure from becoming the impetus for neighborhood decline.
- Emphasize “quality of life” issues when reviewing proposed residential developments.
    - Create more attractive incentives for development that opt for a planned community approach.
    - Adopt more flexible ordinances for planned unit developments (PUD), cluster homes and other innovations in housing development and encourage their use.
    - Amend the City subdivision regulations and Zoning Ordinance to require interconnection between developments, which promotes the establishment of neighborhoods and to provide safe and convenient access to neighborhood public facilities, particularly parks and schools.
    - Amend City ordinances to ensure that natural features are addressed in development and are used as amenities within or as borders of neighborhoods.
    - Establish a mechanism to evaluate the quality of life likely to be experienced in proposed developments.
    - Create incentives for developers to honor public suggestions to improve the quality of life aspects of development.

**Environment:**

- Preserve water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The Chesapeake Bay is probably the single most important natural feature in determining the City's quality of life and economic future. To preserve this asset the City will:
  - Require all development to address the issue of water quality through sensitive site planning and adequate methods of sewage disposal and treatment, and storm water management. Either individually on-site or jointly with other property owners and the City on an area-wide basis, measures must be taken to ensure that water quality is not harmed.
  - Require Planning Commission review of all proposed subdivisions for provisions to protect the natural environment and for compliance with State and Federal environmental laws and regulations.
  - Modify the Zoning, Site Plan and Subdivision Ordinances, and other ordinances as needed, to require appropriate and necessary measures to protect water quality.
  - Maintain and renovate the sanitary sewer and storm drainage systems in already developed parts of the City as needed. Major renovation or replacement shall be done in a manner that improves water quality.
  - In compliance with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act regulations, and to preserve the quality of surface water in the City, require all new development to occur at least one hundred feet from any of the following:
    - tidal waters;
    - tidal wetlands;
    - tributary streams; and
    - nontidal wetlands connected by surface water flow to tidal waters, tidal wetlands or tributary streams. The one hundred feet may be reduced which achieve a similar beneficial water quality impact.
  - In compliance with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act regulations and in order to preserve the quality of surface waters, require all redevelopment of land to demonstrate an improvement of storm water runoff quality of at least ten percent.
- Balance environmental restraints and development needs. Some environmental features pose threats to the public health and safety, but lie in areas of significant strategic development. To achieve balance, the City should:
  - Create a new zoning district for the flight approach area west of Langley Air Force Base that allows reasonable use of the land, while keeping the intensity of the use at a safe level.
  - Allow only low density residential or recreational use of lands in the flight approach area east of Langley Air Force Base.
  - Adopt the Primary Sand Dune Ordinance and prohibit development on or in front of the dune along the Chesapeake Bay.
  - Acquire public land along all of Hampton's Chesapeake Bay shoreline through easement or outright purchase for protection from development and for public access to the shore.

- Allow intense development along the Bay front only within a reasonable distance of the shore, taking into consideration flood and shoreline erosion hazards.
- Protect Big Bethel Reservoir from water quality degradation. Big Bethel Reservoir provides the principal water supply to Langley Air Force Base and Fort Monroe. It should be protected by a Zoning Ordinance overlay district.
- Require storm water management. Management of storm water quality and quantity is an increasing need. Existing problems need to be corrected and future ones avoided, as follows:
  - Develop storm water management plans for each major drainage basin. Where appropriate, these should be cooperatively developed with adjoining localities.
  - Create mechanisms to promote the resolution of drainage problems. Promote basin-wide solutions and discourage on-site, single purpose ones.
- Recognize, identify and protect sensitive environmental features. The following steps should be taken.
  - Map tidal and nontidal wetlands on large-scale maps.
  - Conduct a soils survey to identify areas of hydric soils.
  - Work with the Virginia Natural Heritage Program to identify rare species; recognize their habitats in planning efforts.
  - Incorporate environmentally sensitive lands and features into planning and land acquisition for public facilities. Where necessary and possible, acquire them through conservation easements or outright purchases.
  - Preserve existing mature trees in new developments. Existing ordinances do not adequately protect mature trees, which provide significant environmental and aesthetic benefits. There should be reasonable requirements to preserve them.
  - Change the various development ordinances to require reasonable tree preservation.
- Protect and enhance water access. Very few locations provide boating access, particularly for industrial users. Available sites should be protected as follows:
  - Develop programs to retain existing water-dependent industrial sites on the waterfront. While these programs are meant to protect such sites from encroachment by incompatible users, they are also not intended to promote encroachment by the industrial users into surrounding residential or commercial areas.
  - Develop programs for recreational boating facilities similar to those provided for water-dependent industrial facilities.
  - Encourage further development of existing boat launching, docking and repair facilities, as long as they do not encroach into existing neighborhoods.

## **Urban Design**

- Actively pursue opportunities to provide public access to the water.
- Actively pursue opportunities to protect environmentally sensitive aquatic habitats.
- Protect and enhance views and vistas to rivers, bays, creeks, lakes, and marches.
- Pursue opportunities to provide logical links between water-related public facilities.
- Actively include appropriate water elements in public projects that enhance Hampton's image.
- Actively develop and promote a program of activities, which features the diversity of water-related environments in Hampton.
- Develop programs to enhance and protect the image of the shorelines.
- Inventory neighborhood assets and involve citizens to establish goals and objectives for improving neighborhood identity. The results will be a neighborhood urban design guide.
- Encourage and support neighborhood groups to organize activities that showcase their neighborhood and encourage citizen interaction.
- Design and/or improve public facilities within neighborhoods to support adopted neighborhood design objectives.
- Design public improvements such as signage, landscaping, sidewalks, and roads to reinforce characteristics of neighborhoods.
- Improve the overall appearance of the corridors. Within the established urban design framework, the interstate corridors have several capacities. These two highways are important transportation routes. They also provide physical barriers to development (edges) which define neighborhoods and districts. Each interchange is a potential focus for activity (node). Each role can be enhanced through improvements to the physical form of the corridors.
  - A comprehensive "landscape image" for Interstates 64 and 664 should include treatments to reinforce the linear edge of the highway, special treatments at the entry points to the City and designated districts, and unique landscape images at each interchange.
  - Implement visual corridors within 1500 feet of the interstate rights-of-way to complement efforts within the right-of-way. Use the existing Magruder Boulevard visual controls as a model.

- Establish incentives and award programs for businesses, neighborhoods, and institutions within the interstate corridors to participate in visual improvement programs.
  - Discourage the inclusion of elements that clutter the visual image of the corridors, such as communication towers, substations, billboards and transmission lines. When such elements must be sited in visible locations, avoid placement that will obstruct major vistas to designated landmarks.
  - Cooperation with private businesses that operate visually obtrusive uses, within the corridors, to minimize any negative impacts, including the possibility of long term relocation.
- Promote the Interstates 64 and 664 corridors as the major path for visitors to Hampton. Travel along Interstates 64 and 664 provides the first and last impression of Hampton to many travelers. Of those who come for business or pleasure, the vast majority utilizes the interstate system for access to their destination. For truly successful tourism and development efforts, these highways must not only be attractive; they must provide a clear sense of direction to those unfamiliar with the City.
- Assign standard names and boundaries to particular destinations for promotional and directional material. Reflect these standards in interstate and local signage.
    - Provide a simple City directory graphic with directions to major destinations at each interchange.
    - Create a landscape image to identify each interchange node as a directional landmark.
- Enact public policy that accentuates Hampton's positive physical attributes. Travel along Interstates 64 and 664 reveals the best and the worst of Hampton. A traveler can observe serene natural landscape and attractive business development with one glance and a maze of overhead utility lines and unattractive development with another. Total elimination of the undesirable areas may be unrealistic and perhaps undesirable, but coordinated policies can gradually diminish the presence of less desirable views along these corridors.
    - Adopt land use controls to discourage visually offensive uses.
    - Implement programs to improve the appearance of existing businesses and industry.
    - Formulate coordinated visual improvement plans for industrial and manufacturing districts. Solicit input from those affected.
    - Identify important vistas and adopt programs to enhance and protect these views.
    - Design public improvements to complement the surrounding environment, and to be consistent with the City's urban design goals.
- Develop a Mercury Boulevard Corridor Urban Design Plan

- Solicit input from Mercury Boulevard business owners for public urban design efforts.
- Pursue private funding for efforts not funded by the City.
- Design public infrastructure to reinforce urban design objectives.
  - Create consistent street designs for the corridor.
  - Reinforce the image of Mercury Boulevard as a distinct place with consistent street furniture, including traffic signal standards, public signage, and street lights.
  - Adopt and implement a consistent landscape treatment to improve the visual appeal of the corridor and celebrate its linear nature.
  - Design major entry treatments for the Interstate 64 and 664 entrances to include water features.
- Devise a system of “wayfinding” elements to improve the sense of direction within the corridor.
  - Establish attractive directories at or near the major entry points.
  - Formulate an urban design strategy to provide descriptive and visual clues for various sections.